

## UPCOMING PUBLICATIONS

## Exhibitions

PETER NOEVER  
Jan/Feb 1994LAURA KURGAN  
Feb/Mar 1994BRUCE TOMB & JOHN RANDOLPH (100A)  
April, May 1994QUEER SPACES-QUEER HABITS  
May-June 1994  
organized by Beatriz Colomina, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, Dennis Dohle, Cindy Patton, Robin Leven, and others.

## Forums

ECO-TEC INTERNATIONAL FORUM #4  
LOS ANGELESSpring 1994  
WITH LOS ANGELES FORUM FOR ARCHITECTURE AND URBAN DESIGNECO-TEC INTERNATIONAL FORUM #5  
SAN FRANCISCOSpring 1994  
WITH 2AES (ART AND ARCHITECTURE EXHIBITION SPACE)ECO-TEC INTERNATIONAL FORUM #6  
CORSE, FRANCE

Establishment of the INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ART and Architecture in collaboration with L'ECOLE DE CHAILLY in Paris and ASSOCIATION POUR LA CONSERVATION ET LA VALORISATION DU PATRIMOINE DE MORGOLIA in Corsica

THIS ONGOING SERIES OF EVENTS IN CORSE WILL CONTINUE TO COMBINE THEORY AND PRACTICE WITH PROJECTS SUCH AS: HEARTFELT, A PROJECT TO REVIVE THE RAPIDLY DISAPPEARING TRADITIONAL ARTS AND CRAFT BY ARTIST MEL CHIN; INTRODUCTION OF CONTEMPORARY ARCHITECTURE WITHIN THE TRADITIONAL CONTEXT BY ARCHITECT NEIL DENARI; RECYCLING WATER FOR DOMESTIC AND COMMERCIAL USE, BY LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT NEIL LUTZEN; PROJECT CONDES, DEVELOPMENT OF A VIRTUAL TOURISM THROUGH THE APPLICATION OF ADVANCED MILITARY TECHNOLOGIES BY KYONG PARK; AND THE ASSESSMENT OF TOXICITY AND RECLAMATION OF A MAJOR ABANDONED ASBESTOS MINE FACTORY, HEADED BY TOM MEREDITH; SOCIAL GEOGRAPHER FROM MCGILL UNIVERSITY, MONTREAL; ALAN BAKER, A BOTANIST FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF SHEFFIELD, ENGLAND WHO SPECIALIZES IN HYPER ACCUMULATING PLANTS AND BARU THOMAS, FROM THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY OF NEW YORK.

## WANTED: PROPOSALS

## QUEER SPACE MANIFESTOS/PROPOSALS

Flaming through outer space? Or cruising your inner child? ACTING UP, going down, carrying on.

Hang down, work through, fashion forward, lay back.

Safety, Danger, Utopian downtown. Ask. Tell.

Where are the traces of all our queer ancestors? Where did they arrive, shelter, display, disrupt, depart?

Melvin Dixon says: "I'll be somewhere listening for my name."

Yours and dianous. Trade, betrayal, tradition. Erasures - racisms - races. Labors, labors - loafing, and luxuries, and loneliness. A homeless person's "right to privacy" - where does it live? Younger and older; effeminate/feminine/feminist/masculine/butch. Commissions, emotions, movements.

Dignity/pride/exhibitionism/shyness/shame/attitude/public displays of affection.

"All the rage"

What is a march a parade a demonstration? The dictionary says: "Queer from German queer (oblique, cross, adverse)."

WHAT MAKES SPACE QUEER? HOW TO GIVE QUEER SPACE A HISTORY AND A FUTURE, A POWERFUL PRESENCE? WHAT'S THE QUEEREST IN UTOPIAS, IN DIASPORAS, IN ENVIRONMENTS, IN IMAGES, IN BOWLING LEAGUES, IN HEALTH AND ILLNESS, IN SOLIDARITY, IN URBAN PETS, IN NATIONALISM AND COSMOPOLITANISM, IN SELF-DEFENSE, IN CYBERSPACE, IN JOBS AND NO JOBS, IN FILM AND VIDEO, IN THE CHRISTIAN RIGHT, IN MEMORY, IN THE HYPOTHALAMUS, IN THE HIGH SCHOOLS, IN DANCING AND WALKING, IN CIVIL SOCIETY, AND IN INTERIOR DECORATING? THE STOREFRONT FOR ART AND ARCHITECTURE IN NEW YORK IS SOLICITING QUEER SPACE MANIFESTOS AND MANIFESTO/PROPOSALS FOR A COLLECTION EDITED BY EVE KOSOFSKY SEDGWICK WITH BEATRIZ COLOMINA AND DENNIS DOLLEN, AN INSTALLATION CURATED BY CINDY PATTON, AND OTHER POSSIBLE INSTALLATIONS/EVENTS (VIDEOS) BILLBOARD PERFORMANCES/MONUMENTS/RALLIES, CIRCLE LINE CRUISES/BARTENY'S WINDOWS/ETC., AROUND NEW YORK, TIMED FOR 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF STONEWALL THIS SUMMER. MANIFESTOS AND MANIFESTO/PROPOSALS CAN TAKE ANY FORM BUT SHOULD BE TWO 8 1/2" X 11" PAGES OR LESS INCLUDING ANY DRAWINGS. (PROPOSALS, IF INCLUDED, NEED NOT BE DETAILED AT THIS STAGE.) PLEASE SEND BY JANUARY 1, 1994 TO:

## QUEER SPACE

STOREFRONT FOR ART AND ARCHITECTURE  
97 Kenmare Street, New York, NY 10012  
Tel: 212.431.5795 Fax: 212.431.5755

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## Reports 6

## ARCHITECTURE BEYOND BUILDING

Editors: Shirin Neshat & Amaro Marras  
Spring 1994

OUTCOME OF A SERIES OF FOUR DIALOGUES BETWEEN WRITERS, ARTISTS AND ARCHITECTS, SOCIOLOGISTS, ORGANIZED BY STOREFRONT FOR ART & ARCHITECTURE IN COLLABORATION WITH URBAN CENTER BOOKS, IN SPRING OF 1993, ARCHITECTURE BEYOND BUILDING ABANDONED THE VIEW OF BUILDINGS AS THE ONLY CONSTRUCTS OF ARCHITECTURE, AND HIGHLIGHTED THE FIELD'S NEED TO CONFRONT AND TAKE ON OTHER DIMENSIONS AND ISSUES. THESE EXCHANGES EXPLORED ARCHITECTURE AS CULTURAL, SOCIOLOGICAL, PHILOSOPHICAL AND VIRTUAL SPACES.

## Frankenstein Up Front: Space, Crisis and Psyche

BRIAN BODIGAN and LEON GOLUB  
Real Virtuality

VITO ACCONCI and MANUEL DE LANDA  
Surfacing the Scratch

MARTIN RITT, HANI RASHID and MARK WIGLEY  
Architecture of Knowledge

STANLEY ARONOWITZ and LERBEUS WOODS  
and other articles

## Fronts 5

## STOREFRONT: 1982-1993

Spring 1994

AN EXTENSIVE DOCUMENTATION OF STOREFRONT's 12 YEAR HISTORY, INCLUDING SELECTIVE EXHIBITIONS, PROJECTS, AND FORUMS. THIS PUBLICATION WILL TRAVEL THROUGH THE EARLY 1980'S STREET PERFORMANCE ARTS, TO THE LATE 1980'S SITE-SPECIFIC INSTALLATIONS, TO CONCLUDE WITH THE 1990'S LATEST PROGRAMS OF ECO-TEC INTERNATIONAL FORUMS AND THE NEW SERIES OF COLLABORATIVE BUILDING PROJECTS.

(to be published with Princeton Architectural Press)

## Fronts 6

## ECO-TEC 1992-1993

Spring 1994

THIS PUBLICATION WILL DOCUMENT THE FIRST THREE ECO-TEC INTERNATIONAL FORUMS, A SERIES OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONFERENCES AND PROJECTS IN CORSE, FRANCE (1992 & '93), AND IN NEW YORK CITY (1993). ECO-TEC IS AN ONGOING PROJECT WHICH WAS ORIGINALLY CONCEIVED AS A PROGRAM TO FOCUS ON TECHNOLOGY AND THE ENVIRONMENT AS SEEN THROUGH A CULTURAL LENS, AND TO DESIGN PROGRAMS WHICH PROMOTE INTERNATIONAL AND MULTI-DISCIPLINARY APPROACHES FOR INFORMATION EXCHANGE AND REALIZATION OF CONCRETE PROJECTS.

(to be published with Princeton Architectural Press)

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## A Collaborative Building Project

13 NOVEMBER - 30 DECEMBER 1993

Gallery Hours: Tuesday-Saturday 12-8pm  
Opening Reception: November 13, 6-8pm

Conceived by

SHIRIN NESBAT and KYONG PARK

Project Curator

CLAUDIA GOULD

Design Developed and

FACE FABRICATION

Vito Acconci was assisted by

LUIS VERA, design and Engineering

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This project has been made possible

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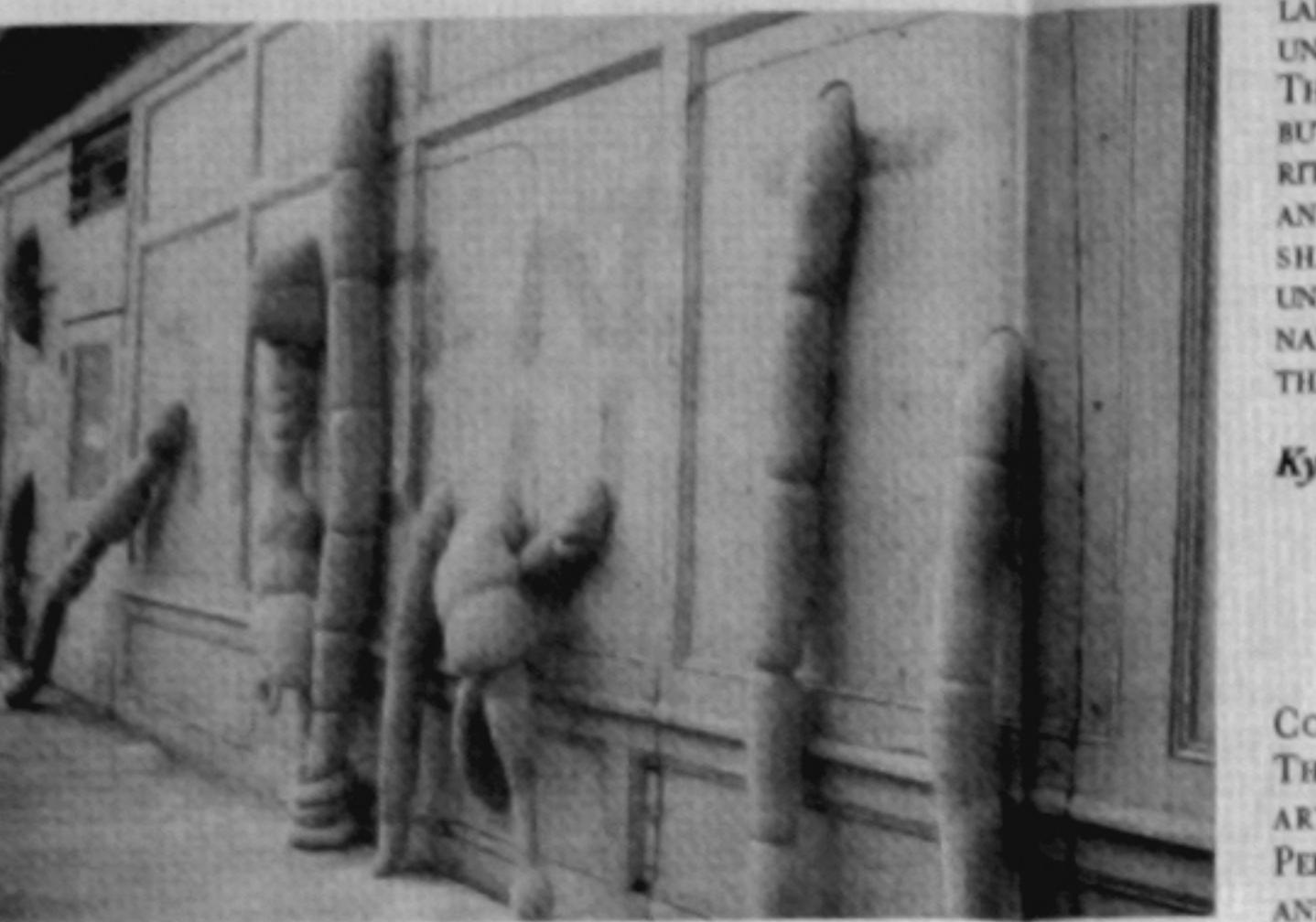
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## MARGIN AS CENTER

OVER THE YEARS THE OLD FAÇADE OF STOREFRONT, BEING SOMETHING DULL AND DEDICATED, HAS ALWAYS BEEN GENEROUS IN ACCEPTING MANY INTERVENTIONS FOR ARTISTIC CAUSES. FIRST, WAS THE STENCILING OF "STOREFRONT" BY JOHN FENNER, A SUPER-GRAFFITI TRULY VERNACULAR TO THE ANARCHISTIC URBANITY OF ARTISTS AS RENEGADES. THEN, JAMES KEYDEN CATHCART, FRANK FANTAUZZI, AND TERENCE VAN ELSLANDER, THREE FIVE PORTERS, PAINTED THE FAÇADE OPEN AS A GALLERY FOR PUBLIC USE. THESE COMMUNICATES OF OUR PRIMAL SUSTENANCE RELEASING THE DRAWDING OF OUR CIVILITY INTO THE COMPOST OF SUBMISSIVE AND MEANINGLESS CONSUMPTION, A SYNDROME OF POST-INDUSTRIAL CITY. FATIGUED OF ART, AS ONLY A REPRESENTATION, THE TOLLETS COUNSELED ART TO EMBRACE FUNCTIONALITY AND UNDERLINED IT AS A PHYSICAL EXPERIENCE.



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LATER, CAME THE INSTALLATION OF "FORMWORKS AND REBARRODIT" BY MARK WEST. THROUGH A SERIES OF HOLES MADE ON THE FAÇADE, CONCRETE WAS POURED INTO SACS OF FABRIC THAT WERE ATTACHED OUTSIDE. WHEN FORMED, THESE AMORPHIC MEMBERS, IN CURVACEOUS FORM, MADE EVERYONE PASSING TO TOUCH. SO CARESSING, THE WAY PEOPLE HANDLED THEM, EVEN THOSE BRUTAL REMINDED US OF THE IMPOVERISHMENT OF TACTILE EXPERIENCE IN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT. WITH OUR VISUAL APPETITE STILL DICTATING TEXTURES, PATTERNS AND MATERIALS OF CITY, THE RE-EMERGENCE OF TACTILITY SEEMS IMPOSSIBLE, UNLESS ALL ARTISTS AND ARCHITECTS BECOME BLIND.

WITH THIS PROJECT, REMOVING THE OLD FAÇADE, MANY VOICED THEIR DISCOMFORT AT THE ARRIVAL OF NEWNESS THAT WOULD CHANGE THE ANONYMOUS PHYSICALITY OF STOREFRONT. ITS HUMBLE STATE OF PRESENCE CERTAINLY REFLECTED THE KIND OF INDEPENDENCE AND DISTANCE THAT STOREFRONT KEPT FROM THE MANICURED STATURE OF THE DOMINANT INSTITUTIONS.

THE FAÇADE CAN ALSO CREATE AN EQUALLY PARTITIONED HISTORY, LIKE THE OLD ONE. THE RESISTANCE TO THE CHANGING FAÇADE IS IDENTICAL TO THE CHANGE, PEOPLE ARE FEARING, OF STOREFRONT ITSELF. PEOPLE OFTEN SAY HOW MUCH THEY LIKE US THE WAY WE ARE, AND THAT USUALLY MEANS THEY DON'T WANT US TO CHANGE. THE FAÇADE, "LIKE YOU TO STAY SMALL," IS LIKE THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF CHILDREN REMAINING SMALL AND ADORABLE FOREVER. MUCH THE SAME, STOREFRONT MUST GROW, IN STRENGTH AND PRODUCTIVITY, PROPORTIONAL TO ITS AGE. THE NOTION OF STAYING THE SAME IS CONTRARY TO EXPERIMENTATION WHICH MUST ALWAYS LOOK FOR NEW AND OTHER THINGS. THEREFORE, AT LEAST FOR ME, THE NEW FAÇADE MEANS NEW THINGS FOR STOREFRONT.

OVER THE YEARS STOREFRONT REPRESENTED TWO THINGS, THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL, MARGINAL IDEAS. THE ORGANIZATION HAD THE MEANS OF DISPLAYING THEORIES IN DRAWINGS, MODELS, PHOTOS AND TEXTS. YET THIS WILL BE THE FIRST DISCOURSE ON A BUILT FORM AND, IF THE THEORETICAL WORKS WERE LEFT IN THEIR STANDARD TIME FOR ACCEPTANCE, THEY LOSE THE URGENCY OF THEIR IDEAS AND ARE HISTORIC THE MOMENT THEY BECOME REAL. REALITY, THEREFORE, HARDLY BENEFITS FROM IDEAS IN EMERGENCE AND THE TIME THAT SEPARATES THE CONCEPTION AND MANIFESTATION OF IDEAS IS THE TIME THAT THEY ARE BUILT OR YET TO BE BUILT.

SURE THE EXHIBITION OF IDEAS, IN THE FORM OF REPRESENTATION, WILL CONTINUE AT STOREFRONT BUT WHY NOT EXHIBIT AN ENVIRONMENT THAT IS BUILT RATHER THAN PROJECTED? THIS PROJECT IS A DESIGN IN BUILT FORM AND NOT ON PAPER. EXPERIMENTS ARE NOT THE SAME AS THEORIES, BUT THEY TOO, CAN HAPPEN IN THE ACT OF BUILDING. THE SEPARATION THAT EXISTS BETWEEN THEORY AND BUILDING IS A MAJOR INTRACTION IN THE DISCOURSE OF AESTHETIC AND, FRANKLY, WHAT REALLY DIFFERENTIATES THEORY AND PRACTICE IS ONLY THAT THEY ARE BUILT OR YET TO BE BUILT.

THIS CHAMPIONING OF REALITY HAS A PURPOSE. THE CHARACTER OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT IS CRITICAL TO THE CIVILITY OF OUR SOCIAL BEHAVIOR. WITH CITIUS IMPLORING, BY VIOLENCE AND AGGRESSION, ON PAPER SPACES MEANINGLESS AND HOPELESS, IDEAS AND THEORIES ARE MEANT TO EMBRACE THE REALITY, IN WHICH WE RESIDE, AND IF IT IS NO LONGER APPLICABLE TO JUST THINK, DRAW OR WRITE. IF THE "BUILT" IS AS ELEGANT AND DEFENSIVE, THOSE IDEAS SHOULD BE BUILT AND TRIED. THEORETICAL WORKS ARE A STACK OF REALITY THAT "WE", AT LARGE, ARE YET TO COMPREHEND AND ACCEPT. HOWEVER SMALL IT MAY BE, STOREFRONT IS BUILDING THIS PROJECT TO REALIZE THE REALITY OF THEORY.

THIS PROJECT IS PUTTING A GALLERY OUT INTO THE CITY. AS A BUILT EXHIBITION, THE CULTURE OF EXPERIMENT, THAT IS ALSO CONFINED WITHIN THE GALLERY, IS NOW OUT AND THERE. THE NEW PROGRAM FOR STOREFRONT AND EVERY TWO YEARS, WE WILL INVITE AND COMMISSION ARTIST(S) OR ARCHITECT(S), SOMETIMES TOGETHER, FOR AN EXPERIMENTAL BUILDING PROJECT.

STOREFRONT IS A FORUM FOR MARGINAL IDEAS, THE KIND THAT ARE WITHOUT ECONOMIC, POLITICAL AND AESTHETIC DOMINANCE. HOWEVER, IF THE RECENT CHANGES IN THE WORLD MEAN SOMETHING, IT IS ABOUT THE CHANGE IN THE MEANING OF THE "MARGIN". WHILE THE DOMINANCE OF CENTERS WAVER, NEW IDEAS, INDIVIDUALS AND INSTITUTIONS ARE EMERGING. CHANGES ARE IN ORDER AND, WITHOUT CENTERS, THE MARGINS LOSE THEIR VISION. THEN, THE CONFRONTATION OF THE MAIN AND THE ALTERNATIVE BECOMES VOID, AND THE NEW POSITION OF "MARGIN" WOULD BE TO RELOCATE THE CENTER IN ORDER TO OCCUPY IT.

THE PROJECT IS ALSO ABOUT THE CONTEMPORARY STATE OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SPACES AND THEIR CONTRADICTIONS THAT



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ON THE OTHER HAND, PRIVATE SPACES ARE BECOMING PUBLIC SPECTACLES. SPACES OF HUMAN PROJECTS ARE THE MARKETS OF UNDERGROUND COMMERCE. STRAY BULLETS, THE MARKS OF PRIVATE SPACE BECOMING PUBLIC. THE TALK SHOWS, LIKE WINTREY AND DONAHUE, CHANNEL THE INTIMACY OF PRIVATE LIVES FOR PUBLIC CONSUMPTION. AS THE VIOLENCE HALF-TONES THE GLOSS OF OUR CITIES, WINDOWS, DOORS, AND WALLS BECOME SMALLER AND THICKER. THE REDUCTION OF FENESTRATION AFFIRMS VIRILIO'S INTERPRETATION OF ARCHITECTURE AS A FORM OF DEFENSE, THIS TIME, URBAN NOT MILITARY. BUILDING MATERIALS IS NOT FOR DECORATION BUT THE MATERIALIZATION OF OUR SPATIAL VIOLENCE.

THE IRONY OF THE LAST DECADE IS THE SIMULTANEOUS CONVERSION OF PUBLIC SPACES INTO PRIVATE, AND PRIVATE SPACES INTO PUBLIC. THE DIFFERENCES, CRITICAL FOR THE DEFINITION OF BOTH PRIVATE AND PUBLIC, ARE NOW INVISIBLE AND AMORPHOUS. SPACES, PHYSICAL OR OTHERWISE, ARE NOW PRIVATE AND PUBLIC, SIMULTANEOUSLY OPEN AND

REFLECTED THE KIND OF INDEPENDENCE AND DISTANCE THAT STOREFRONT KEPT FROM THE MANICURED STATURE OF THE DOMINANT INSTITUTIONS.

THIS PROJECT'S ODD POSITION IN THE WORLD DID NOT COME EASILY FOR EITHER ACCONCI AND HOLL. AS THIS INTERVIEW WILL REVEAL, BOTH PARTIES AGONIZED OVER THE COLLABORATION AND AT TIMES FOUND IT EXTREMELY DIFFICULT. LIKE ANY RELATIONSHIP, WHETHER PERSONAL OR PROFESSIONAL, THEY SUFFERED AND AT TIMES COMPROMISED THEMSELVES WITH THE HOPE OF CREATING SOMETHING ELSE OR OTHER.

BECAUSE OF THIS TENSION I HAD DECIDED TO INTERVIEW THEM ALONE AND THEN TOGETHER, HOPE THEY WOULD SPEAK MORE FREELY ABOUT HOW THEY ACTUALLY FELT. IN THE END I INTERVIEWED THEM TOGETHER IN AN EFFORT NOT TO SEPARATE OR ALIENATE THEM MORE, WITH THE THOUGHT THAT IF NEED BE, I WOULD INTERVIEW THEM ALONE AFTERWARDS. IT IS VITO WHO SUGGESTED, INSTEAD OF THIS, THAT BOTH OF THEM WOULD TALK IN THE MARGINS OF THE INTERVIEW, SAYING WHAT THEY REALLY WANTED TO SAY BUT WERE UNABLE OR HAD NOT THOUGHT OF AT THE TIME. WHAT FOLLOWS THEN IS AN ABRIDGED COLLABORATIVE INTERVIEW WITH DIBARISTIC? NOTES BY VITO ACCONCI AND STEVEN HOLL.



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James Cathcart, Frank Fantauzzo and Terence Van Elslander (1992)

11, 12 Vito Acconci and Steven Holl



11

12

Closed, at the same time.

## INTERVIEW WITH VITO ACCONCI AND STEVEN HOLL

**Claudia Gould:** Being invited by Storefront to curate this project has been like being asked to organize a dinner where the main ingredients had already been selected. It's a bit unclear what my role should be or should have been. Rumor has it that the two of you put yourselves together. True, and -- if so, how did it happen?

**Vito Acconci:** We started a project together in 1988, in Washington DC. It was ill-fated -- we never got to a design phase. We started to have ideas together, but we never really got to work out a design together.

**Steven Holl:** We had a concept and we had a huge site -- the site in front of the National Portrait Gallery -- in the heart of downtown at Seventh Ave Northwest.

**CG:** What were you asked to do?

**Va:** To make what they called an "art walk." The site was an L-shaped area of seven blocks. They were probably asking us to "adorn" the area, what we wanted to do was "organize" it. In either case, we were being asked to deal with landscape, cityscape -- sidewalls and streets -- not buildings.

**SH:** We produced a tiny document as a conceptual strategy for an urban experience. It was called "A Space Above, A Space Through and A Space Below."

**Va:** Separately, we made sketches for different areas. We jotted down general design ideas. They saw what we had and accused us of deconstructing Washington.

**CG:** How had you come together then, how did you know each other?

**Va:** When I first came to New York in 1976-77, Vito was

very much in the spotlight. I went to Anthology Film Archives to see a screening of his videos. Vito, I was sitting in the front row watching you back and forth. Afterwards I went up to you very informally, and asked if you had ever collaborated with an architect. Do you remember?

**Va:** No.

**SH:** I remember -- both of your shoes were united (all laughing). I said maybe, some day, we could work together.

**CG:** What made you decide to be an architect?

**SH:** As an undergraduate student of architecture, I studied

closed and lethal as they come; much heavier than the art world could ever be. I will step lightly here, it is simply my feeling as an outsider looking in.

**SH:** I don't think it is quite the same. Architects can agree and they can publish in a certain set of magazines, but, in the end, if it can't built it does not exist as an experience for others. The history of architecture is a part of the environment of the time, which is rather exciting. Go to Vicenza and look at Palladio's buildings. He speaks through these buildings and these spaces. The real speaking is of space and the material. Once something is built, it is there, it is part of the experience

**Va:** When you enter a museum or a gallery you're in effect, saying: "I am an art viewer" -- by extension, you're separating yourself from the "others" -- those who are not viewers. When you are walking through a doorway, or climbing up a stairway -- whether or not you know anything about theories of architecture, conventions of architecture -- you're an architect (i.e., just like anybody else), and you're influenced by that architecture; you're a victim of that architecture, just like anybody else.

**SH:** All of my buildings struggle against the idea of a facade. If you are building something, that has a concept or meaning, the first thing you want is to get beyond some kind of a front. Robert Venturi wrote a manifesto about the decorated shell. The idea of a false front is something he embraces and works with. I work to permeate the entirety of the space with the material and the detail of a conceptual strategy. I am trying to work deeper than a facade.

**CG:** Certainly Storefront goes much deeper than a false front but what you have created is still, by definition, a facade.

**SH:** There is no facade -- when it is open, it is gone. That is the beauty of the piece. I like Kyong Park's statement: "NO WALL, NO BARRIER, NO INSIDE, NO OUTSIDE, NO SPACE, NO BUILDING, NO PLACE, NO INSTITUTION, NO ART, NO ARCHITECTURE, NO ACCONCI, NO HOLL, NO STOREFRONT." That is a position without a facade.

**CG:** What I like is that this facade is not a cover, not a surface -- it's a space-maker; it's an instrument between the inside and the outside; it can make spaces inside and outside.

**CG:** Would you have done it differently if the piece had not been temporary?

**SH:** For us, it is not temporary. None of us ever thought it was temporary.

**Va:** From the beginning, what interested both of us, was what's happening on the street and what is happening inside; there are two worlds. The interesting moment is when worlds spill over and mix. Vito and I shared an interest in breaking down, destroying, or interacting with the kind of wall between the two worlds. The project has an energy that I am going to open the door and go in. That's the difference between what's happening on the street and what is happening inside; there are two worlds. The interesting moment is when worlds spill over and mix. Vito and I shared an interest in breaking down, destroying, or interacting with the kind of wall between the two worlds. The project has an energy that

**CG:** You were working to contribute a new identity for Storefront?

**SH:** No, we went through about 50 different ideas, from a collapsing wall, to everything else. This idea of the facade, that opens out and creates a collision between the sidewalk and the

proportions, because I couldn't impose, because it was a collaboration.

**Va:** But, it was a collaboration. If you had one system and I had another, then neither one of us should have given in. One system should have bumped against the other, resulting in a third system.

**SH:** Our ideas are wildly different from one another. What I don't know is -- how he has those ideas? When commenting on the Helsinki project Vito said so many things which supported my work but, when we tried to work together, it was a complete collision course.

**Va:** Part of the problem was the stress put on facade. The idea of putting a skin on a building didn't interest either of us. Once we started thinking of breaking that skin, once we started thinking of bulges, on either side of that skin, then maybe we got interested.

**CG:** I never thought that you were asked to do a facade. Initially, Storefront had hoped to change the entire structure. As all of the funding couldn't be raised, the work was reconceived on a smaller scale. The facade was the one element that could bring together the vital issues of public and private. It is the border between them and offers their one point of intersection.

**SH:** I must say, there was pressure in the process -- the funding. You have to come to a decision, and then, it has to be built. If we hadn't had an imposed deadline, I think our head-hunting would have gone on for another six months.

**CG:** Are you saying the project is not resolved, or the struggle is not resolved, or both?

**SH:** Both, well we'll find out. (both laughing)

**CG:** Vito, where is there no resolution? Are you going to walk by this project and say you don't feel good about this?

**Va:** I hope I feel good about it. My hesitation is: The final design may have been, not so much a resolution, but a resignation. Maybe the problem is: since the idea is one of adaptation, it's impossible to decide what final design to adapt to.

**CG:** Do you think it was because the concept was not resolved, that "the concept drives an idea"?

**SH:** No, we went through about 50 different ideas, from a collapsing wall, to everything else. This idea of the facade, that

opens out and creates a collision between the sidewalk and the

proportion, because I couldn't impose, because it was a collaboration.

Until then, I can only have a theory of the space, and maybe

the idea of a project until it's built, until it's there, until people use it.

CG: What is your theory of the space?

Va: The given is that this is a gallery space, a space used for architecture/art exhibitions. I wanted to take, very quickly, the notion that this was a space adjustable to different shows; different needs people might have when putting a show together. Therefore, the gallery should never have a finished space. In general, when I do a project, I want to set up a general structure -- but then, particular incidents can change according to particular people, particular times, particular history and news. I can provide only a master plan, a conjecture.

SH: In that regard, the project has two extremes; totally closed, and totally open. Everything in between makes it interesting. The project can't be conveyed by a single image. What is interesting is how it is in its different positions. If it is closed it is a wall with lines on it. When it is open, the outside is inside and the inside is outside. If it is nightime, the light from the interior spills out on the street. We are providing an instrument to do something with, to play with.

Va: We've provided, I hope, the potential of spaces, rather than an actual space. That's the best thing about the project -- maybe that's the only thing the project is.

CG: Steven, if I may quote from your book Anchoring. "Architecture is bound to a situation. Unlike music, painting, sculpture, film and literature, a construction (non mobile) is intertwined with the experience of a place. The site of a building is more than a mere ingredient in its conception. It is its physical and metaphysical foundation." Is the Storefront project a physical and metaphysical foundation for 1993 on the Lower East Side's Kenmare Street?

SH: Absolutely. When you open those south facing doors in the spring, the sun is coming into the space. The people on Kenmare Street -- who may have never been in an art gallery before, might suddenly find themselves looking or even walking inside. The facade is the ghost of the idea that Vito had; the extension of the sidewalk into a vertical wall. We said earlier that none of us are entirely satisfied, maybe that is because our aspirations are so high.

CG: Are you talking about fear?

SH: No, not fear, but ambition. Ambition is what drives work; it is what I enjoy. I want to improve X or Y; I want to keep this moving -- to get better. The worst thing that can happen

**Vito Acconci, Temporary Renovation of the Renovated MAK Central Exhibition Hall, Vienna (1993)**



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James Cathcart, Frank Fantauzzo and Terence Van Elslander (1992)

10 Formworks and Blockers" Mark West (1992)

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Claudia Gould

INTERVIEW WITH VITO ACCONCI AND STEVEN HOLL

**Claudia Gould:** Being invited by Storefront to